

What is claimed is:

1. A method of providing troubleshooting assistance for use of a communications device of a computer system, comprising:

at the computer system, utilizing a computer-implemented application to perform one or more checks on the computer system and communications device;

at the computer system, detecting from the one or more checks whether there is a problem related to operation of the communications device with the computer system;

at the computer system, locating an error code corresponding to the problem detected from the one or more checks; and

at the computer system, displaying the error code.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

receiving a telephone call from a user of the computer system, wherein the user verbally provides the error code that is displayed; and

providing verbal technical assistance to the user over the telephone call, wherein the technical assistance is based on the error code provided by the customer.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more checks includes checking a connection between the computer system and the communications device.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more checks includes checking operational parameters of the communications device.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the communications device is a digital subscriber line modem.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

at the computer system, locating a troubleshooting tip corresponding to the problem detected from the one or more checks; and

at the computer system, displaying the troubleshooting tip.

7. A method of providing troubleshooting assistance for use of a communications device of a computer system, comprising:
 - at the computer system, utilizing a computer-implemented application to perform one or more checks on the computer system and communications device;
 - at the computer system, detecting from the one or more checks whether there is a problem related to operation of the communications device with the computer system;
 - at the computer system, locating a troubleshooting tip corresponding to the problem detected from the one or more checks; and
 - at the computer system, displaying the located troubleshooting tip.
8. The method of claim 7, wherein the one or more checks includes checking a connection between the computer system and the communications device.
9. The method of claim 7, wherein the one or more checks includes checking operational parameters of the communications device.
10. The method of claim 7, wherein the communications device is a digital subscriber line modem.

11. A method of providing troubleshooting assistance for use of a communications device of a computer system, comprising:

at the computer system, utilizing a computer-implemented application to perform one or more checks on the communications device and external network connected to the communications device;

at the computer system, detecting from the one or more checks whether there is a problem with the external network affecting operation of the communications device;

at the computer system, locating a troubleshooting tip corresponding to the problem detected from the one or more checks; and

at the computer system, displaying the troubleshooting tip.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the one or more checks includes checking for a response from a DNS server.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein the one or more checks includes checking for a response from an email server.

14. A method of providing troubleshooting assistance for use of a communications device of a computer system, comprising:

at the computer system, utilizing a computer-implemented application to perform one or more checks on the communications device;

at the computer system, utilizing the computer-implemented application to detect from the one or more checks whether there is a problem related to operation of the communications device that a re-start may solve; and

at the computer system, utilizing the computer-implemented application to initiate the re-start of the communications device upon detecting that there is a problem that the re-start may solve.

15. The method of claim 14, further comprising:

at the computer system, utilizing the computer-implemented application to detect whether the re-start of the communications device solved the problem; and

at the computer system, utilizing the computer-implemented application to re-set the communications device upon detecting that the re-start failed to solve the problem.

16. The method of claim 14, wherein the communications device is a digital subscriber line modem and the problem that a re-start may solve is a failure of the transceiver to synchronize.

17. A method of providing troubleshooting assistance for use of a communications device of a computer system, comprising:

at the computer system, utilizing a computer-implemented application to perform one or more checks on the communications device;

at the computer system, utilizing the computer-implemented application to detect from the one or more checks whether there is a problem related to operation of the communications device that a re-set may solve; and

at the computer system, utilizing the computer-implemented application to re-set the communications device upon detecting there is a problem that the re-set may solve.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein utilizing the computer-implemented application to detect from the one or more checks whether there is a problem related to operation of the communications device that a re-set may solve comprises re-starting the communications device and detecting whether the re-start solved the problem.

19. A computer system, comprising:
 - a display;
 - a communications port;
 - a communications device coupled to the communications port and to an external network;
 - a processing device in communication with the display and the communication port, wherein the processing device executes an application that performs one or more checks based on the interconnection of the communications port with the communications device and based on the interconnection of the communications device with the external network to detect whether a problem is present, and wherein the application locates information corresponding to a detected problem and displays the located information.
20. The computer system of claim 19, wherein the located information is an error code for the problem.
21. The computer system of claim 19, wherein the located information is a troubleshooting tip.
22. The computer system of claim 19, wherein the one or more checks includes checking operational parameters of the communications device.
23. The computer system of claim 19, wherein the one or more checks includes checking for a response from a DNS server of the external network.
24. The computer system of claim 19, wherein the one or more checks includes checking for a response from an email server.
25. The computer system of claim 19, wherein the communications device is a digital subscriber line modem.

26. A method of providing troubleshooting assistance for use of a communications device of a computer system, comprising:

at the computer system, utilizing a computer-implemented application to perform one or more checks on the communications device, the one or more checks being performed by querying a dynamic information store of the communications device that is maintained by the communications device;

at the computer system, detecting from the one or more checks whether there is a problem related to operation of the communications device;

at the computer system, locating information corresponding to the problem detected from the one or more checks; and

at the computer system, displaying the information.

27. The method of claim 26, wherein the dynamic information store is an XML page accessible from memory of the communications device.

28. The method of claim 26, wherein the information is an error code.

29. The method of claim 26, wherein the information is a troubleshooting tip.

30. The method of claim 26, wherein the communications device is a digital subscriber line modem.

31. A method of providing troubleshooting assistance for use of a communications device of a computer system, comprising:

at the computer system, utilizing a computer-implemented application to perform one or more checks on the computer system and communications device;

at the computer system, detecting from the one or more checks whether there is a problem related to operation of the communications device with the computer system;

at the computer system, locating an error code corresponding to the problem detected from the one or more checks; and

reporting the error code from the computer system to a remotely located computer system.

32. The method of claim 31, wherein reporting the error code from the computer system comprises reporting the error code by transmitting the error code from the communications device when the operation of the communications device with the computer system allows.

33. A method of providing troubleshooting assistance for use of a communications device of a computer system, comprising:

at the computer system, utilizing a computer-implemented application to perform one or more checks on the communications device and external network connected to the communications device;

at the computer system, detecting from the one or more checks whether there is a problem with the external network affecting operation of the communications device;

at the computer system, locating an error code corresponding to the problem detected from the one or more checks; and

at the computer system, displaying the error code.

34. The method of claim 33, wherein the one or more checks includes checking for a response from a DNS server.

35. The method of claim 33, wherein the one or more checks includes checking for a response from an email server.